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THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

MB 77-175 #26
By DJH Date 10/81

April 5, 1960

MEMORANDUM OF MEETING WITH THE PRESIDENT
(Tuesday, 29 March 1960 at 10:00 a.m.)

1. I first discussed with the President, the Record of Actions of the March 24 meeting of the NSC. I reported to him that there were no problems with the record itself. However, I wished to say to him that the Secretary of State wanted the President's attention called to one particular matter. This was in connection with the presentation by Dr. Kistiakowsky on the feasibility and national security implications of a monitored agreement to stop or limit ballistic missile testing or production. I reminded the President that following Dr. Kistiakowsky's presentation, Mr. Herter and Admiral Burke, as well as Dr. Kistiakowsky, indicated their view that further continuing studies were needed. The President was concerned that too many people would be taken from their regular work, and no clear-cut decision was made. Secretary Herter does not wish to insist that the Record of Actions direct further studies but wished it to be understood with the President that there will be further study.

I expressed the view to the President that our record of studies regarding reduction and control of armaments had been uneven and spotty. We had had massive efforts such as those conducted under the leadership of Harold Stassen and other ad hoc groups such as the Coolidge group, and others. However, there had not been a clear-cut continuity and continuing preparation. I said I wished to put forward for the President's consideration the notion that there might be established for control and reduction of armaments, a mechanism somewhat similar to the Net Evaluation Subcommittee of the NSC. Such a committee should of course be under the chairmanship of the Secretary of State and would be a limited group which would report periodically to the Council. This would in no way disturb the internal structure of State and Defense and if an interdepartmental group were set up, it could receive its guidance from and report to the subcommittee and through it to the Council.

The President felt that the notion was worth exploring and directed me to consult with the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense on the basis of a document which would contain a proposed charter and

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"Continental Defense" and the Planning Board was now actively working on a revision of the Continental Defense Policy paper with full participation of the Bureau of the Budget. I said that this then left the "Control of the Seas" presentation, which was to be given in a Special Meeting of the Council on Friday, April 1.

The President felt that it was all right to invite Mr. Stans to this meeting and also to expose him to the results of the "targeting" study. He said he wished to make it clear, however, that none of these studies should be staffed through the Bureau of the Budget.

7. I reported to the President that I had some uneasiness about the fact that the Council had not recently discussed Germany and Berlin and I wondered whether he wished to have something soon before the Council in this connection. The President said that he felt that as long as Chancellor Adenauer's position is as inflexible as it seems to be there seemed to be little profit in discussing unification alternatives or alternatives with respect to Berlin. However, he wanted the best thinking brought to bear on the subject and if the Planning Board could come up with any new approaches, by all means he would want them to be brought to the attention of the Council.

8. I then explained to the President what underlies the topic of Iran on the Council agenda for April 1. I pointed out that the problem with respect to the Iran paper was one that would arise to plague us increasingly in the months ahead. This was a situation in which the objectives and policy guidance in papers were generally still valid but the general considerations sections needed considerable updating, some papers to a much greater degree than others. I said that it disturbed my sense of orderliness to have papers in existence which were obviously outdated.

The President said it seemed to him that we could make a note for the record as to the date that any policy guidance seemed to be valid which would be an updating of the paper itself. I agreed but pointed out that this still left the general considerations to be dealt with. The President wondered whether the Planning Board could not update these papers, feeling that there was no point in taking the Council's time for this purpose, but also agreeing that he wished the NSC records to be left in a tidy condition for his successor, whoever the successor may be.

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The President then said that in the last six months of his administration, he did not wish to spend the time of the Council in initiating new papers except as the Special Assistant should decide these were needed. He wanted to repeat his desire to have legacies of thought on important matters. He wanted to make sure that we had a table of all policy papers and all valid studies thoroughly indexed, and that the studies were available to the next Administration.



Gordon Gray
Special Assistant to the President

cc: Mr. Lay

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